

FILED

02/14/2017

Ed Smith
CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA

Case Number: AF 09-0688

PR-09-0688

William Pratt
1035 Avian Road
Helena, MT 59602-8342

February 11, 2017

Montana Sup. Ct. Justices
215 N. Sanders, Justice Bldg.
P.O. Box 203001
Helena, MT 59620

Re: LGBT people should have equal access and representation in the legal system in Montana

Montana Sup. Ct. Justices:

Dear Supreme Court Justices of Montana,

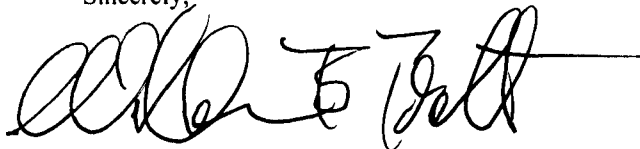
I believe LGBT people should have equal access and representation in the legal system in Montana.

I am writing in support of the proposed changes to rule 8.4 that would prohibit conduct that a lawyer knows or reasonably should know is harassment or discrimination on the basis of race, sex, religion, national origin, ethnicity, disability, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status or socioeconomic status in conduct related to the practice of law. No one seeking legal services should be treated with bias and hostility simply because of who they are.

No one seeking legal services should be treated with bias and hostility simply because of who they are.

Please support the proposed changes to rule 8.4 that would protect LGBT people and members of other marginalized groups by barring legal services providers from discriminating against them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Pratt', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

William Pratt
406-458-7036

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FEB 14 2017

Ed Smith
CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA

PR-09-0688

Kathleen Atkins
PO Box 716
Cut Bank, MT 59427-0716

February 11, 2017

Montana Sup. Ct. Justices
215 N. Sanders, Justice Bldg.
P.O. Box 203001
Helena, MT 59620

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Sincerely,



Kathleen Atkins
2156014330

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Ed Smith
CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA

PR 09-0688

Thomas Magarian
PO Box 716
Cut Bank, MT 59427-0716

February 11, 2017

Montana Sup. Ct. Justices
215 N. Sanders, Justice Bldg.
P.O. Box 203001
Helena, MT 59620

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Sincerely,



Thomas Magarian

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Ed Smith
CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA

PR 09-0688

Connie Geiger
304 Breckenridge
Helena, MT 59601-4432

February 13, 2017

Montana Sup. Ct. Justices
215 N. Sanders, Justice Bldg.
P.O. Box 203001
Helena, MT 59620

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Please support the proposed changes to rule 8.4 that would protect LGBT people and members of other marginalized groups by barring legal services providers from discriminating against them.

Sincerely,



Connie Geiger
406-449-3552

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Ed Smith

CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA

James C. Nelson
Justice, Montana Supreme Court (Ret.)
841 S. California St.
Helena, MT 59601
406-431-2131
jcnelson44@gmail.com

PR 09-0688

February 13, 2017

Chief Justice Mike McGrath and Justices
Montana Supreme Court
215 N. Sanders
Helena, MT 59620

Re: MRPC 8.4(g)

Dear Chief Justice McGrath and Justices

I am writing in support of the proposed amendments to MRPC 8.4(g) that would prohibit conduct that a lawyer knows or reasonably should know is harassment or discrimination on the basis of, among other things sexual orientation and gender identity.

No officer of the Court should be permitted to discriminate against any other person for any reason, much less on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity characteristics that the person was born with and make that person who they are.

While there are those who would claim a right to discriminate against LGBTQ persons on the basis of freedom of speech, or freedom of religion, there is absolutely nothing in the First Amendment, or in Article II, Sections 5 and 7 of Montana's Constitution that permit, encourage or facilitate any sort of discriminatory conduct against any person by another person.

All lawyers and judges take an oath to support, protect and defend the Constitutions of the United States and the State of Montana. The proposed amendments to Rule 8.4(g) merely hold lawyers to their sworn oaths.

The legal profession and the judiciary must lead the fight against the bigotry, hatred and discrimination that has come to characterize today's America. I urge this Court to make a strong and positive statement: discrimination against people because of their sexual orientation or gender identity will not be tolerated in the legal profession of Montana. Please adopt the proposed amendments to MRPC 8.4(g).

Respectfully,


James C. Nelson
Montana Supreme Court Justice (Retired)

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CLERK OF THE SUPREME COURT
STATE OF MONTANA